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T 241852 PAGE 01 NC 73114

TOR:160647Z MAY 73

RR RUEAIIB
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH
MJA869JIA618
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DE RUMJIR #8618 1360525
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 160510Z MAY 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1736
INFO RUFNPS/USDEL JEC PARIS 2188
BT
C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8618

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PINT, MARR, VS
SUBJECT: PHOENIX GOES UNDERGROUND

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON DTD 15 MAY FROM CAN THO

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L CAN THO 0314

E.O. 11652: ADS DECLAS DECEMBER 31, 1974
TAGS: PINT, MARR, VS
SUBJECT: PHOENIX GOES UNDERGROUND

1. AFTER A TWO MONTH RESPITE, THE PHOENIX PROGRAM IS QUIETLY COMING BACK TO LIFE. AT A MAY 11 DELTA PROVINCE CHIEFS MEETING, MR IV COMMANDER, MG NGUYEN VINH NGHI, DIRECTED ALL SECTORS TO SHARPLY INCREASE INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS AND VIGOROUSLY ROOT OUT THE VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE (VCI).

2. PHOENIX ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN GENERALLY RESTRAINED SINCE THE CEASEFIRE, PARTLY BECAUSE THEY VIOLATE ARTICLE 20 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT, AND PARTLY BECAUSE THE WORKING LEVEL FORCES--TERRITORIAL UNITS, SUB-SECTOR S-2S, POLICE, VILLAGE OFFICIALS--LACKED THE ZEAL TO PURSUE THEIR RISKY BUSINESS. FOR A TIME, THE GVN TRIED TO CONTINUE THE PROGRAM UNDER THE COVER OF CHANGING THE NAMES OF THE TARGETS FROM VC INFRASTRUCTURE TO "DISTURBERS OF DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY." GENERAL NGHI'S RECENT INSTRUCTIONS TO SECTOR COMMANDERS DID NOT PRETEND TO MAKE SUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L

[redacted]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY DSW DATE 3/24/87

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T 241852 PAGE 02-02 NC 73114

TOR: 168647Z MAY 73

SEMANTIC DISTINCTIONS.

3. A PHONG DINH PROVINCE PHOENIX OFFICIAL TOLD A CONSULATE GENERAL OFFICER MAY 11 THAT SAIGON HAD INSTRUCTED ALL PROVINCE PHUNG HOANG (PHOENIX) COMMITTEES TO DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF MONTHLY OPERATIONS AGAINST VCI.H##3 8744-7 ~~2811 17,1587, 17835167~~ WITHOUT THE FANFARE AND PUBLICITY THAT IT USED TO RECEIVE, BUT THE GVN HAS ASSIGNED IT HIGH PRIORITY. WISNER UNQUOTE WHITEHOUSE

[redacted]

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TRANSCRIPTION FOLLOWS

TOR: 160647Z MAY 73

CONFIDENTIAL SAIGON 8618

SUBJECT: PHOENIX GOES UNDERGROUND

Following Sent Action Saigon DTD 15 May from Can THO

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SUBJECT: PHOENIX GOES UNDERGROUND

1. After a two month respite, the Phoenix Program is quietly coming back to life. At a May 11 Delta Province chiefs meeting, MR IV Commander, MG Nguyen Vinh Nghi, directed all sectors to sharply increase intelligence operations and vigorously root out the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI).

2. Phoenix activities have been generally restrained since the ceasefire, partly because they violate Article [illegible] of the Paris Agreement, and partly because the working level forces – territorial units, sub-sector S-25, police, village officials – lacked the zeal to pursue their risky business. For a time, the GVN tried to continue the program under the cover of changing the names of the targets from VC Infrastructure to "Disruptors of Domestic Tranquility." General Nghi's recent instructions to sector commanders did not pretend to make such

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TOR: 160647Z May 73

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semantic distinctions.

3. A Phong Dinh province Phoenix official told a consulate general officer May 11 that Saigon had instructed all province Phung Hoang (Phoenix) committees to double the number of monthly operations against VCI without the fanfare and publicity that it used to receive, but the GVN has assigned it high priority. Wisner unquote Whitehouse